

Rural-Urban Youth Migration and Informal Self-Employment in Omdurman Market, Sudan

Shadia A.M Daoud , Niveen Salah Eldeen, Abdel Raouf Bello 

Abstract: This study was conducted to investigate the situation of rural youth migrants to Khartoum state in the informal sector. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 50 respondents from Omdurman Market. Data were collected in the face-to-face interview by using a pretested questionnaire and observation. The study findings indicated that majority of migrant youth were less than 19 years old, migrated alone seeking jobs as most of them left their work as farmers, their socio-economic situation characterized by vulnerability, poverty and illiteracy and low skill to get the job outside of the informal sector. Migrant youth were self-employed because they did not have the possibility of joining the formal sector. Results also indicated that youth in informal sector challenged by the lack of protection, low income and no access to capital to improve their self-employed work. The study also revealed that in spite of the challenges faced the youth have no desire to go back to their place of origin. The study concluded that Young migrants are more vulnerable when in combination with their age and stage of life; they experienced isolation, exclusion, discrimination, and insecurity.

Keywords: Rural urban, youth, migration, informal sector, Khartoum, Sudan.

Introduction

Rural urban migration is main cause of growing of urbanization in developing countries. Rural urban migration recently has a new pattern that majority of migrants are youth (UNHABITAT, 2010). Youth (under 18 years old) are predicted to make up 60% of urban populations by 2030 and youth are over-represented among the urban poor (Sommers, 2010) Recently increase of population urban area led to high competition for jobs and expand of informal sectors (UNFPA, 2007 and World Bank, 2009). Urban growth has been strongly associated with urban poverty and slum growth too. Most urban youth, and particularly youth migrants, live in unplanned settlement areas, often squalid conditions with no social services of amenities. Across Africa, the majority are no longer in school and are unable to get jobs (Mabala, 2011).

According to Abusin (2004), Sudan is witnessing rapid urbanization from massive rural-urban migration, and continuous internally displaced people influxes flooding urban centers specifically Greater Khartoum (8 million people).

Sudan has a very young population – two thirds of Sudanese are under the age of 34. Over 20 % of young people are unemployed. A quarter of youth living in urban areas and half of those living in rural areas are poor..(UNFPA2012). The recent phenomenon of migration in Sudan that migration includes many young boys alone or combined their

families seeking job to supporting urban areas. The Rural urban migration of youth creates new types of urban informal sector in which rural youth self-employed this requires analysis and investigation of this new pattern of informal sectors challenges and opportunities. Recent years have produced some studies on internal migration in Sudan particularly focusing on problems and constraints faced by rural families However, to the best of our knowledge, there has been no research on youth males and females migration and the challenges young people face during and after migration.

Objectives

This research intends to contribute to filling this gap by carrying out an in-depth study of the youth migration to Khartoum state that is self-employed in informal sector manage to own their work earning living by working independently. The specific objectives are to:

1. Study the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents.
2. Determine the pattern of rural youth migration process to Khartoum State.
3. Explore the challenges and opportunities of respondents in the informal sector.
4. Examine the future perspectives of rural youth migrants.

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Abdel Raouf Bello (Correspondence)

raoufbello@yahoo.com

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Methodology

A sample of 50 male rural youth was purposively selected from Omdurman market according to self-employed activities in the informal sector. Data collected by face-to-face interview using a pretested questionnaire that addressed each sample unit of the study. The questionnaire was administered through oral interview because literacy was very low among respondents

Results

Table 1 shows that the majority (70%) of migrants youth interviewed were in young age (15-18) years old, literacy was very low among the migrant youth as 58% were illiterate 28% completed primary

education. The results also indicated that majority of youth migrated from areas not far from Khartoum 44% from Gezira State, 40% from White Nile State, while only 16% from conflict area Darfur. About 74% of respondents migrated alone and 16% migrated with their family while 10% migrated with their relatives. The main reason for youth migration was poverty 46% migrated looking for work, in addition to 40% migrated because of the poverty of their families and 14% migrated as result of civil war. Data in table 1 also revealed that 58% of respondents used to work as farmers before migration and other were not working while some dropped education.

Table (1) Distribution of the Youth according to socio economic profile

Characteristics	F	%
Age	35	70
15-18	15	30
19-22	50	100
Total		
Education		
Illiterate	29	58
Completed primary education	14	28
Secondary Education	7	14
Total	50	100
Place of origin		
Darfur	8	16
Gezira State	22	44
White Nile State	20	40
Total	50	100
Reasons of migration		
Looking for work	23	46
Poverty of my family	20	40
Conflict and war	7	14
Total	50	100
Work before migrated		
Farmers	29	58
Dropped out from school	14	28
Not working	7	14
Total	50	100
Migrated with whom		
Alone	37	74
With my Family	8	16
With my relative	5	10
Total	50	100
The period of stay in Khartoum State		
5-8	35	70
9-12	15	30

Total	50	100
Living with whom		
Rented house with group of migrants youth	40	80
With my family	8	16
With my relatives	2	4
Total	50	

The work of migrant Youth

Data in table 2 revealed that 60% of respondents worked as mobile sellers, 24% food vendors and 16 are shoes shining. About 68% of respondents commented that they frequently change their works from job to another in search for better income. Data in the table also indicated that 50% of respondents work for more than 15 hours per day 96% did not satisfied with the nature of their current work, because of its low-income return, irregularity and/or hard to do. About 60 % of respondents indicated that they send remittance to their families, while 40 % to support themselves.

Table (2) Distribution of respondents according to their work situation

Situation of work	F	%
Types of work		
Mobile sellers	30	60
Food vendors	12	24
Shoes shining	8	16
Total	50	100
Frequent changing of the work		
Yes	34	68
No	16	32
Total	50	100
How did you get job		
From friend	12	24
Peoplr form our tribe	21	42
My self	17	34
total	50	100
Numbers of hours you work		
10-12	12	24
13-15	13	26
More than 15 hours	25	50
Total	50	100
Satisfaction of the work		
Yes	2	4
No	48	96
total	50	100
Why		
Low income	30	62.5
is irregular	8	16.7
Hard work	10	20.8
total	48	100

Spent the income		
Support my family	30	60
Support my self	20	40
Total	50	100

Challenges Youth faced in work

Table 3 shows that 92 % of respondents indicated that their work in formal sectors is not protected and challenged. About 96% commented that they are not able to save enough money to improve their self-employed works. The table also revealed that 96% of respondents are challenged with the lack of capital and low access to credit as to improve their work

Table (3) Challenges faced by respondents to improve their work

Challenges	F	%
Is your work in informal sector protected		
Yes	4	8
No	46	92
Total	50	100
Live is very expenses		
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
Total		100
Difficult to save money	50	100
Yes	0	0
No		100
Total	50	
Difficult		
Yes	30	60
No	20	40
Total	50	100
Why		
lack of capital,	48	96
yes	2	4
no	50	100
total		
lack of access to credit,		
yes		96
no	48	
total	2	4
Total	50	100

Future Perspective

Table 4 indicates that 94% of respondents commented that they are not planning to go back to their place of origin. Very few (26 %) indicated that they are looking for acquire new skills to improve their working conditions, while about 76% planned to migrate outside of the country.

Tale (3) Distribution of respondents according to their future perspectives

Future perspective	F	%
Go back to my place of origin		
Yes		
No	3	6
Total	47	94
Acquire new skills to have good job	50	100
Yes		16
No	8	84
Total	42	100
Plan to Travel and work abroad		
Yes	38	76
No	12	24
Total	50	100
Continue education\		
Yes		
No	3	6
Total	45	94
	50	100

Discussion

The findings of the study have theoretical as well as practical significance. This micro level study gave insights to understanding the importance of youth work in the informal sector in Khartoum state. Socio-economic situation of rural youth characterized by vulnerability, poverty and illiteracy low skill to get a job outside of informal sector. As indicated by Sommers, (2010) youth are over-represented among the urban poor most rural migrant youths, live in unplanned settlement areas, often in difficult conditions and are vulnerable to high levels of unemployment and underemployment. These results are in line with the UNHABITAT (2010) which indicated that the young age of rural migrant youth and confirmed the argument of the new pattern of rural urban migration that involved the young male. Poverty was the push factor of the rural youth and their families most of them migrated because of poverty of their families and youth who migrants alone were looking for means of living in urban area. This result also in line with the IFAD (2007), which indicated that poverty in the Sudan is deeply entrenched and is largely rural.

Most of the youth migrants used to work as farmers generally many used left farming and looking for alternative work Study by Bello *et al* (2015) confirmed the negative attitude of Sudanese rural youth towards agriculture as the occupation. Most rural youth are either employed (waged and self-employed) or 'not in the labor force'. The issue, therefore, is not so much about unemployment, but

serious under-employment in low productivity, predominantly household-based activities (IFAD 2007)

The migrant youth interviewed were self-employed because they did not have the possibility of being wage-employees. In this sense, they were self-employed because they had no choice –The migration literature suggests that urban migrants, who are attracted to cities and towns due to higher wage in the formal sector, may end up in a low paying informal sector, since there is more labor supply to the 'modern sector' than there is labor demand to absorb it all (Potts, 2007). Urban work is highly competitive and migrant youth are most likely to be found in a range of vulnerable, informal, irregular and often illegal occupations (World Bank, 2007). The youth migrants face many challenges in their informal self-employed work all the challenges related to their poverty and vulnerability. The youth migrants become more susceptible and less competitive in urban areas because of lower endowment in education, experience, financial capital and social network (Ursula2012). The study also revealed that in spite of the challenges faced the youth have no desire to go back to their place of origin. Surveys with migrants highlighted their uncertainty about and reduced expectations from staying in town as the urban economy declined in recent years (Potts, 2007; Grimm *et al*, (2012) However, migration remains a viable livelihood option for rural youth in many contexts, in the absence of opportunities in the rural areas (Tacoli and Mabala, 2010).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current rural youth migration to urban areas patterns in Sudan is complex and widely articulated with pull-and-push factors. Most of the rural youth migrants are less educated than urban residents and tend to fill the least skilled jobs available in cities.

The study focuses on migrant youth because they represent a specific category of migrants whose unique needs, rights and challenges are not addressed as part of the larger migration policy debate.

In conclusion, young migrants are more vulnerable when, in combination with their age and stage of life, they face isolation, exclusion, discrimination, and insecurity. Moreover, in the migration process young people can lose their social networks and may also be without parents or family members to provide guidance and care.

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